

CONGRATULATING OFFICERS AND
MEMBERS OF NORTH HAMPTON
VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

HON. MELISSA A. HART

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Ms. HART. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the officers and members of the North Hampton Volunteer Fire Department on the occasion of the Department's 50th Anniversary. The members of the Fire Department have unselfishly served the citizens of Hampton for half a century and now look forward to continuing their brave service in the 21st century.

The members of the North Hampton Volunteer Fire Department plan to celebrate their 50th anniversary with a dinner and dance event on Saturday, March 12, 2005 with cocktails beginning at 6:00, and dinner at 7:00 at the Hampton Banquet Hall.

I ask my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives to join me in honoring the Volunteer Fire Department of North Hampton. It is an honor to represent the Fourth Congressional District of Pennsylvania and a pleasure to salute citizens such as the North Hampton Volunteer Firefighters who truly embody the spirit of public service and the meaning of bravery.

VERMONT'S GREAT JAZZ MASTER

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, Vermont's great jazz saxophonist, Big Joe Burrell, died on February 2 at the age of 80. He was born and spent his early years in Port Huron Michigan. The story of his start in music is legendary. Here is how Brent Hallenbeck recounted it in the Burlington Free Press:

As a shy 10-year-old, he approached his mother's boss and asked to borrow \$5 so he could buy a saxophone.

"Saxophone?" the man asked. "What are you going to do with a saxophone?"

"I'm going to play it," little Joe Burrell told him. And he did, mastering his instrument in the next few years. After serving in the U.S. Army during World War Two, his musical career took off. At an Akron dance he played the opening act for a B.B. King performance, and King thereafter asked Big Joe to play saxophone in his orchestra. He would go on to tour with King for almost two years before meeting up with another major figure in American music, Count Basie.

Basie invited Big Joe to play in his club in New York and would become the major musical influence in Big Joe's life. "Count Basie was the predominant influence on me until the day he died, and still is today," Burrell said in 2002.

Ten years of playing in Canada eventually brought him to Montreal, from where it was an easy journey to play a date in Burlington, Vermont. There he discovered his nephew, Leon Burrell, was a professor of education at the University of Vermont. The meeting was doubly fortuitous: Leon invited Big Joe to live with him, and he made Leon's home his own for many years. And Vermont gained its most well-known, most-well-beloved jazz musician.

Big Joe jammed with fellow musician Paul Asbell, and out of their collaboration was formed an ensemble called The Unknown Blues Band. The core of The Unknown Blues Band included Asbell, Chuck Eller on keyboard, Tony Markellis on bass, and Russ Lawson on drums, and of course, Big Joe. Not only did they make music, but they shaped a whole new generation of musicians. Big Joe, who played with BB King and Count Basie, Etta James and Little Richard, was a formative influence on Trey Anastasio, the guitarist for Phish. In fact, Burrell played guest appearances with Anastasio's band in recent years.

Last year, the Unknown Blues Band celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary. The band was a Burlington staple, playing at gigs everywhere and most especially at a weekly performance at Halvorson's Upstreet Café in Burlington. Even as age seemed outwardly to slow him down, Big Joe kept performing at his customary high level. Café owner Tim Halvorson told the Free Press, "He'd shuffle in with his walker or a cane, but, boy, as soon as the music started and he got a glass of Canadian Club and he grabbed his saxophone, he was 30 years younger." As his nephew Dr. Leon Burrell said, speaking of his last performance just a month ago, "He went out doing what he did best. It's like a cowboy dying with his boots on."

Big Joe was a big man—not only in physical stature, but big in heart. He loved music, he loved people, and he loved playing in Vermont. Vermont loved him back. He was an emblem of the amazing power of jazz, our nation's preeminent form of music. He showed all who lived in the Green Mountain State how jazz can speak to each of us, directly, deeply; he showed us that the music born in the South and in the big cities of the Mid-west has flowed, like a mighty river, all through our nation. He was an important tributary of that river, and all of us in Vermont who love music will remember Big Joe for that, and for the wonderful performances he gave us, time and again.

IN RECOGNITION OF MR. GEORGE
HAMILTON

HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an extraordinary businessman and exceptional American, George Hamilton, President of Dow Automotive and recently named one of the most powerful African Americans in corporate America.

Since 1988, Black Enterprise has published a list of the most powerful African Americans in corporate America. This year, Mr. Hamilton has been chosen by the magazine for this honor. The list is compiled from the 1,000 largest publicly traded companies and leading international corporations located in the United States. This year Mr. Hamilton is among 75 African Americans honored from 62 companies and twelve industries.

Mr. Hamilton joined the Dow Chemical Company in 1977 as a seller of plastics in the automobile industry. Since coming to the company, Mr. Hamilton has held a number of positions in sales, marketing, development and business operations. Prior to joining Dow Automotive in 2000 he served as North American Commercial Director for Engineering Plastics for the Dow Chemical Company.

While holding his position at Dow Automotive, Mr. Hamilton is also active within many engineering and automotive Boards. He is a proud member of the Society of Automotive Engineers and the Society of Plastics Engineers. Mr. Hamilton also sits on his company's Global Commercial Leadership Network, Corporate Contributions Committee as well as the CEO Council on Diversity.

This is a significant honor for Mr. Hamilton and I wish to congratulate him on his accomplishments and recognition as one of the 75 most powerful African Americans in corporate America.

HONORING SENATOR JOHN
VASCONCELLOS

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, March 1, 2005

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the outstanding work of California State Senator John Vasconcellos. In the nearly four decades Senator Vasconcellos has served in the California State Legislature, he has worked tirelessly to promote policies which emphasize education and peace, both in government and in local communities.

Senator Vasconcellos was born in San Jose, California, in 1932. He was the eldest of three children born to a Portuguese father and a German mother. Notably, he became the only student in the history of Santa Clara University to serve as Student Body President, to be the Valedictorian of his class, and to win the Nobili Medal, which is awarded to the most outstanding graduate. After completing his undergraduate studies, Senator Vasconcellos served two years as a lieutenant in the United States Army before returning to Santa Clara University to enroll in law school.

In 1966, Senator Vasconcellos was elected to represent California's 13th district in the State Assembly, a position he would hold for 30 years. During that time, he served on many of the state's most important committees, including the Committee on Ways and Means, the Assembly Education Committee, and the Select Committee on Ethics. During his time as a State Assemblymember, he also spearheaded some of the most important and socially consequential legislation of his time. He was responsible for the creation not only of the first campus childcare program in the nation, but has been a steadfast supporter of student financial aid throughout his career. His commitment to education is demonstrated not only by his creation of the Cal Grant Program 25 years ago, which now serves over 60,000 students each year, but also by his advocacy of the personal and academic development of all children, as evidenced by his creation of the California Task Force to Promote Self Esteem and Personal & Social Responsibility.

After terming out of the California State Assembly in 1996, he was able to run for the open State Senate seat in his district and won. He continued to tirelessly serve the public and the cause of quality children's education in this capacity until his retirement in 2004. Though he no longer holds public office, Senator Vasconcellos continues to work for the improvement and accessibility of education, and has worked to establish a scholarship fund as